(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government have asked for Planning Commission to go ahead for seeking World Bank's assistance of Rs. 500 crores to save India's 7517 km. coastline;

(d) whether Swaminathan Committee set up by the Government had warned Government about degradation of coasts in 11 States from sea erosion and marine pollution; and

(e) the details of action Government have taken on the recommendations of the panel of Swaminathan Committee to contain erosion and marine Pollution?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As per the information received from various scientific institutions who are involved in the study relating to impacts of tsunami, the mangroves, beaches, corals, groundwater in the tsunami affected area are in the process of revival, but would have different time scale for their reformation/revival.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Prof. M.S. Swaminathan Committee Report on Coastal Regulation Zone Notification, 1991 has identified several coastal and marine issues including erosion of the coastline and marine pollution as areas of concern.

(e) Based on the recommendations of the Prof. M.S. Swaminathan Committee the Ministry has initiated steps for demarcating Vulnerability Line all along the coastal stretches of the country. The vulnerability line shall be demarcated taking into account flooding due to waves, tides, sea level rise and erosion/accretion.

With regard to control of pollution in coastal and marine waters, this Ministry has assigned The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), to prepare a National Action Plan tor preventing pollution of coastal waters from land based activities.

Banning of drugs to save vultures

2956. SHRI SANJAY RAUT Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of three common vultures species has dropped by 95 per cent in last 10 years;

(b) if so, what are the reasons and what provisions are done to protect these species;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Hon'ble Prime Minister has asked to withdraw the use of certain drugs for protecting these species; and

(d) if so, details thereof and what are the reasons for non-withdrawal of these drugs even after one year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) As per the reports available, the population of three vulture species namely Slender billed, White backed and Long billed vultures has declined by about 97% in the Indian sub-continent in the last ten years.

(b) Studies carried out in the Indian sub-continent have revealed that the veterinary formulation of the drug diclofenac is the major cause for this sharp decline. These three species of vultures have been included in schedule-l of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, affording highest degree of protection. They have also been listed by IUCN, the World Conservation Union as 'critically endangered' in the year 2000. An action-plan has been prepared by Ministry of Environment and Forests for saving the vultures.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The National Board of Wildlife, in its meeting held on 17th March, 2005 under the chairmanship of Hon'ble Prime Minister, recommended a ban on the drug diclofenac. Subsequently, consultations with concerned Ministries and pharmaceutical companies to phase out the drug have been held. Since diclofenac is an effective and economical veterinary drug, various issues like availability of a viable substitute, its production and availability in the market, use in humans, etc., involving number of stakeholders, have to be ascertained before a ban is imposed.

Research on forests and wildlife

†2957. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of persons to whom money was provided to carry out research on environment, forests and wildlife during the last three years alongwith the amount provided to them;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.